

NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

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For Immediate Release

July 22, 2005

Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on July 21, 2005, **CHRISTOPHER S. SWOPE**, age 27, of Murphysboro, Illinois, was sentenced in United States District Court in Benton, Illinois. SWOPE, who had previously pled guilty to conspiracy to distribute more than 100 kilograms of marihuana and possession of a firearm by a felon, was sentenced to 105 months' imprisonment, 4 years supervised release and was fined \$400.

The violations took place between February 2004, and April 1, 2004, in Murphysboro, Illinois.

The investigation was conducted by the Murphysboro Police Department, Jackson County Sheriff's Office, Carbondale Police Department, Southern Illinois Enforcement Group, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, pursuant to those agencies' participation in the Project Safe Neighborhoods initiative in the Southern District of Illinois. Under the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative, federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutors are working together to prosecute drug dealers, felons in possession of firearms, and criminals that use firearms to commit violent offenses or drug trafficking offenses. The Jackson County Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative is a joint and cooperative effort of the United States Attorney's Office, Jackson County States Attorney's Office, Drug Enforcement Administration, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, Carbondale Police Department, Jackson County Sheriff's Office, Southern Illinois Enforcement Group, and Murphysboro Police Department.

The case was assigned to Assistant United States Attorney Amanda A. Robertson for prosecution.